
Artists Records in the Archives

MARAC, November 8, 2013

Our panel

Speakers

Janine St. Germain is a consulting archivist in New York and works directly with artists and their estates.

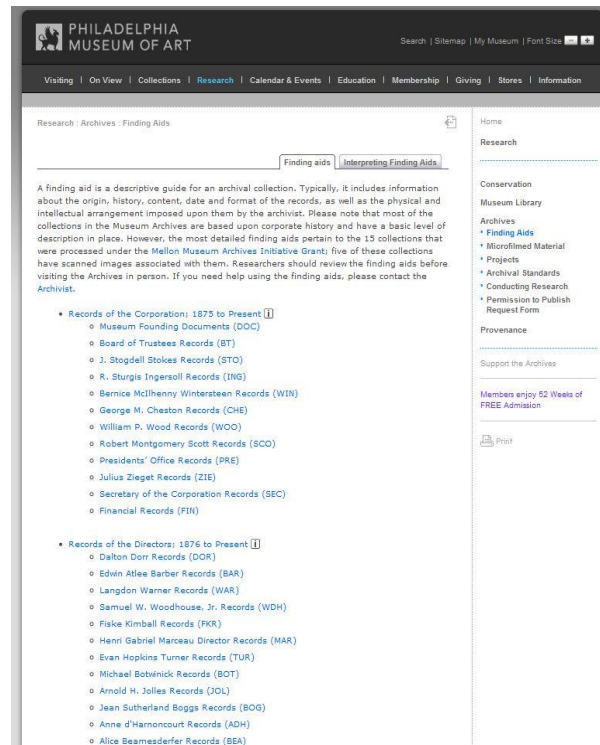
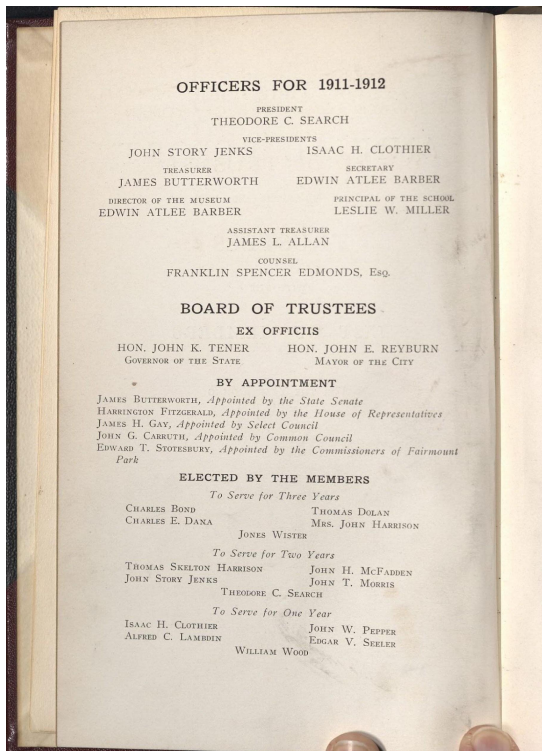
Christiana Dobrzynski Grippe, PACSCL Project Manager, has appraised, processed, and preserved artists' records at the MoMA, as well as working with donors

Beth Levitt, NARA (Philadelphia) serves on the board of the Senior Artists Initiative which assists Philadelphia artists with inventorying their work and produces oral histories of these artists.

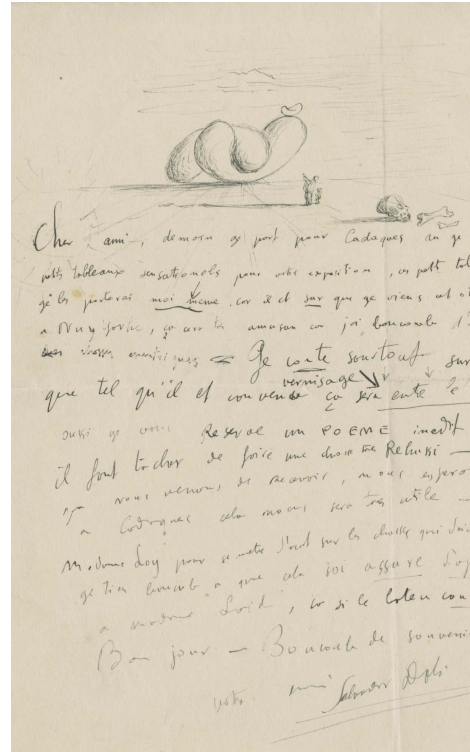
Moderator

Susan Anderson works with artists' papers at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, providing reference and access in a museum context.

Part of the PMA Archives looks a lot like typical corporate records...



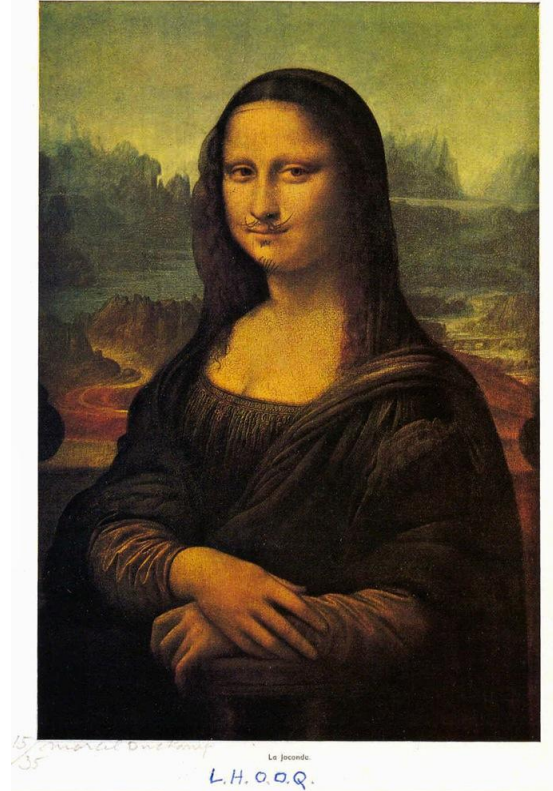
...and the other half is not typical at all, such as this Salvador Dali letter with a doodle



Photographs that could be personal in nature and/or used as raw materials for a work of art



Or images of artwork, which could be in turn manipulated and turned into a new piece or series



Documentation of an artist's career, such as reviews, promotional materials, exhibition history, interviews



They could also include business records, such as these ledgers from Julien Levy's gallery

Artist Subject		Source		Purchaser		
		description →	date purchase	cost	asking price	selling price
943	de Cuirico from Phil Rousseau	oil	Phil Rousseau Est. ap. mid Jan 15	125.-	350.-	2000
944	Remett "veau Newport" 1863	oil	The old Print Shoppe. Est. ap. mid 15	350.- less 25% 100.- 250.-		
945	" "veau Bencley"	oil				
946	" "The Beach"	oil				
947	Hennessy "Twilight"	oil				
948	Eugene Berruau drawing 1937		Tou Howard Est. ap. mid 15	40.-		
0949	Maer Ray: painting, object drawings, calligraphy and facades		returned Oct 47	1000.-		
950	Ant: sculpture	wood	Paula Berruau Galleries	110.10		
0951	1. Picasso: "2 figures" 2. Picasso: "Bills & pear" 3. Picasso: "Flowers" 4. Picasso: "Walden"	gouache " oil oil glass Walden	Leon Kelly 100000 500 10000 60000 25000	100000 500 70000 60000 25000		returned partially returned returned
0952	Maer Ray's: 1. The tortoise 2. Hupl. 3. L'equivoque	oil oil oil	Returned Oct 47 107 Anger et H. Willemsen 85		13333 8333 16666	
953	Maer Ray's object No. 7. Table tortoise	wood	107 107 107		1166	
954	Maer Ray object #4. Amusement box	wood	107 107 107	3333	50.-	

Art supplies and other tools



Research on other artists, artistic processes, and historical movements



Items collected for inspiration or to be incorporated into a work of art



Documentation of an ephemeral experience, such as a performance piece.



A collected “archive” that also functions as an artistic statement



Artists records occupy the gray area between what is art and what is archives



Artists records show how inspiration and ideas can flow between life and art...and then back again



An artist's legacy could be diminished if steps aren't taken to safeguard the materials and their original context



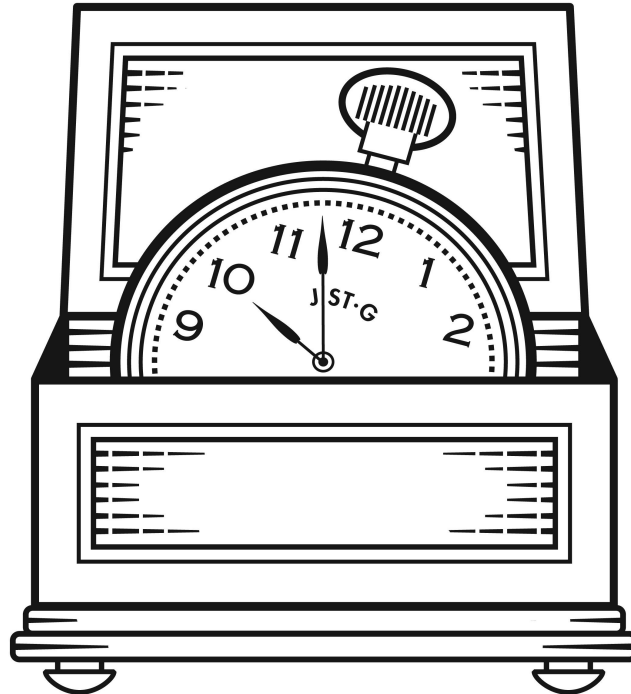
There is also the question of how and when records should be “archived.” Again, the usual rules don’t apply and traditional concepts are not as easily defined.



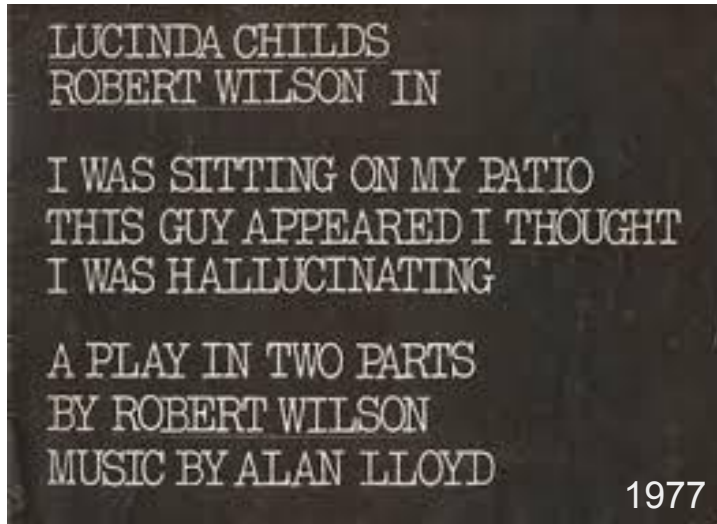
Issues of donation are also something to be considered – working with an artist's directive, even after death -- as well as the wishes of the family, estate, and other holders of the records



Janine St. Germain



Robert Wilson Archives



The artist-designed workspace

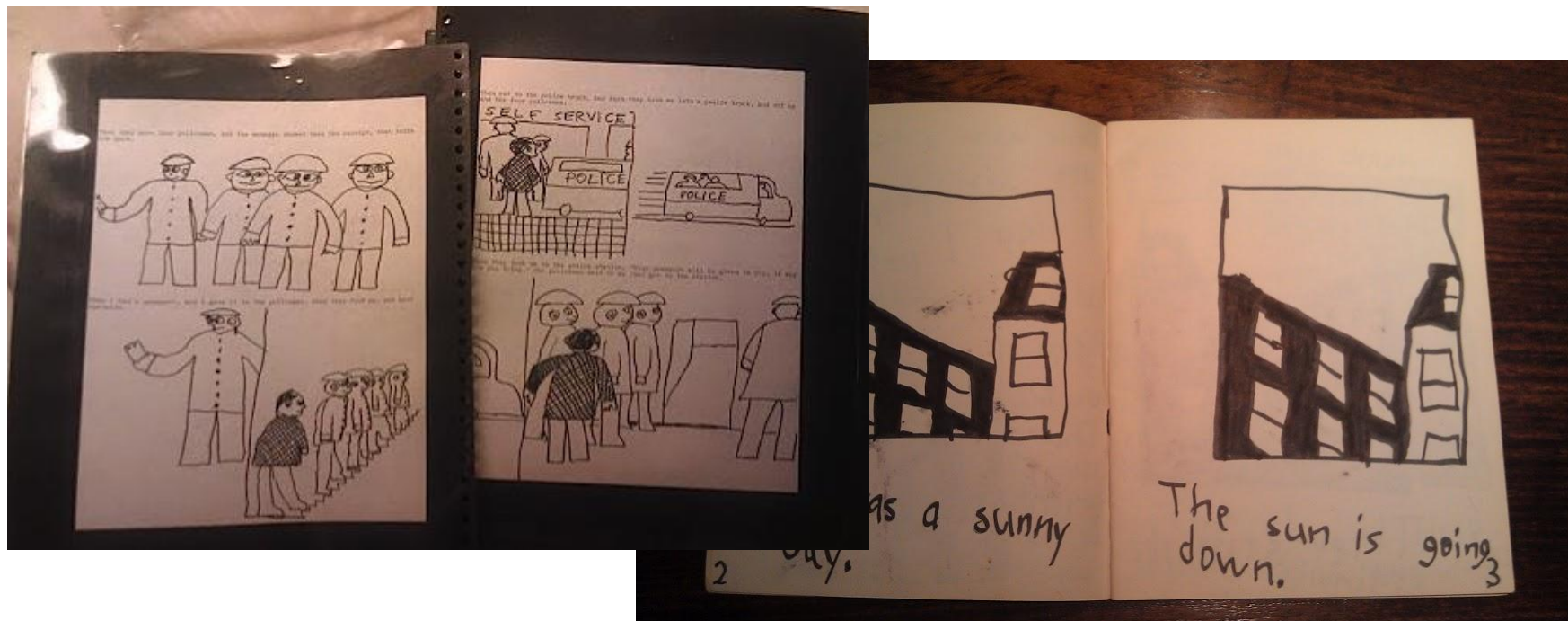
Robert Wilson Archives, ca 2001



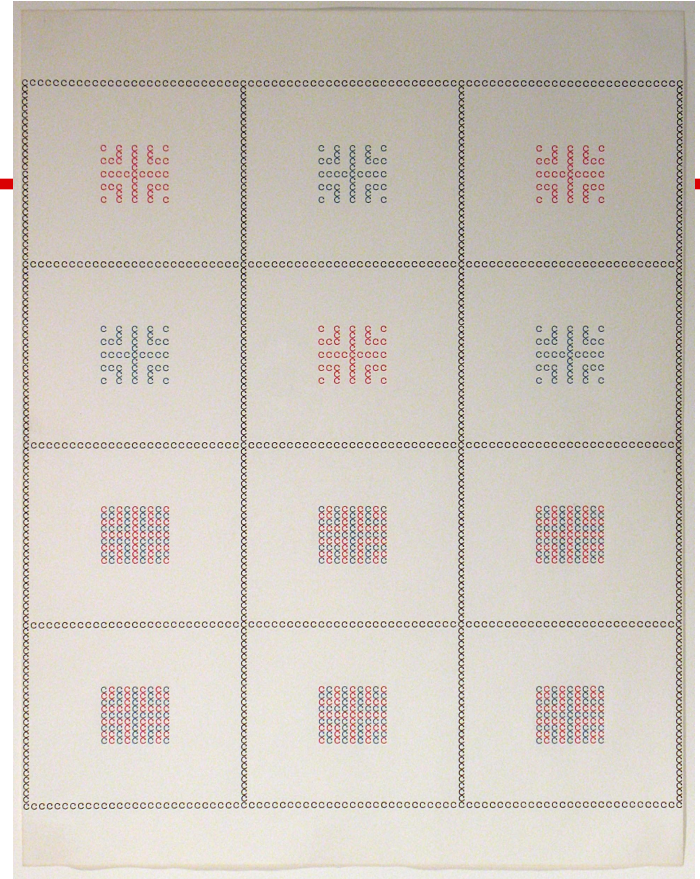
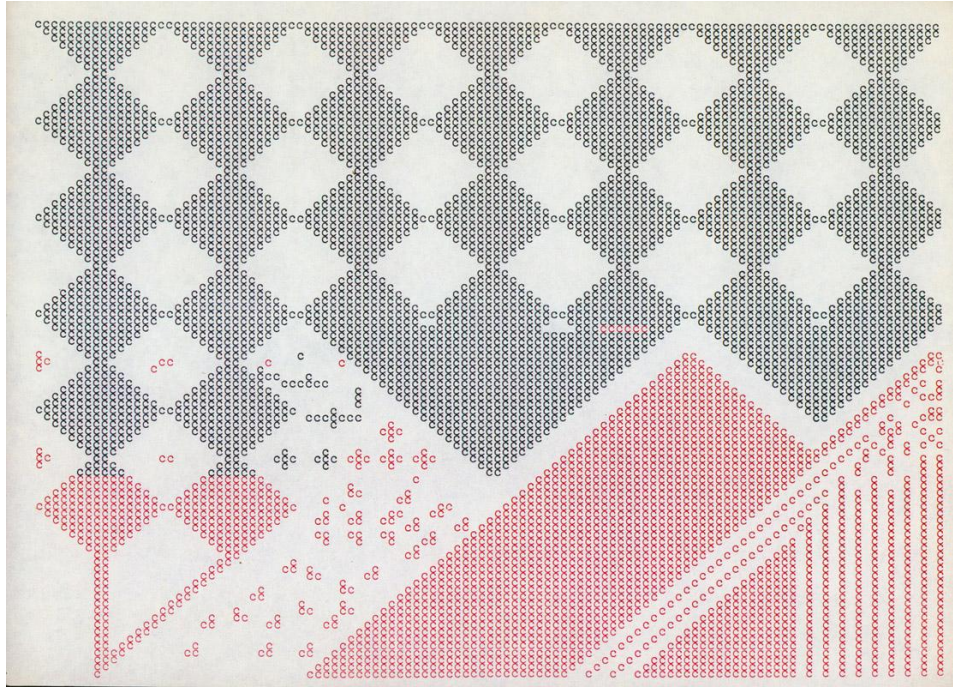
Christopher Knowles



Early journals



Typings



Robert Kushner Studio



Kushner : site specific work

77th Street Lexington Line, Gramercy Tavern



collaborations with Miotto Mosaics

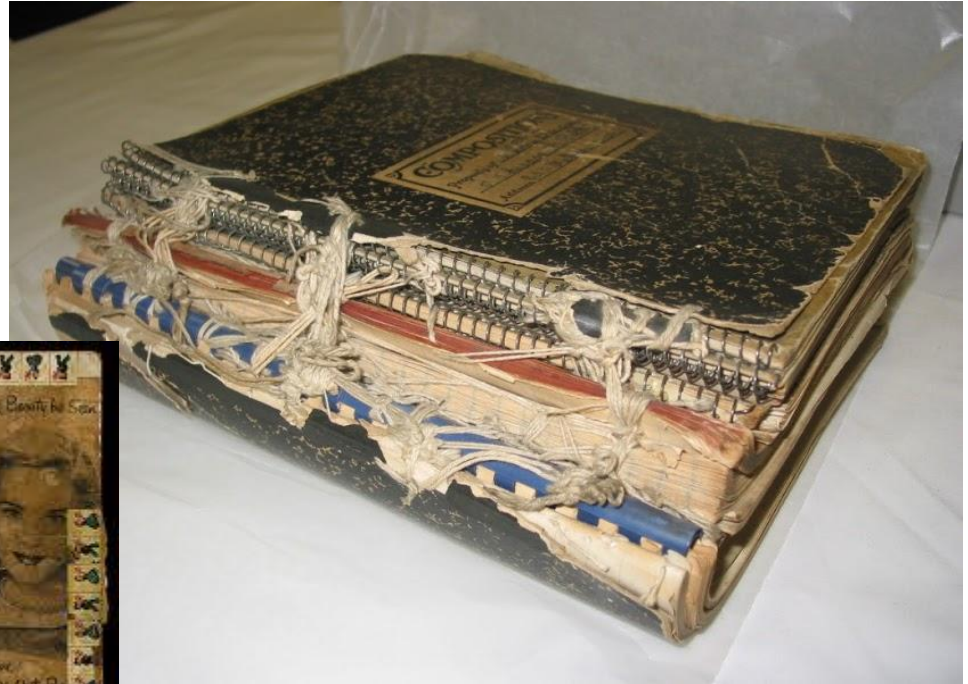


Henry Darger Archives

American Folk Art Museum



Darger manuscripts, collages, correspondence, journals, resource material



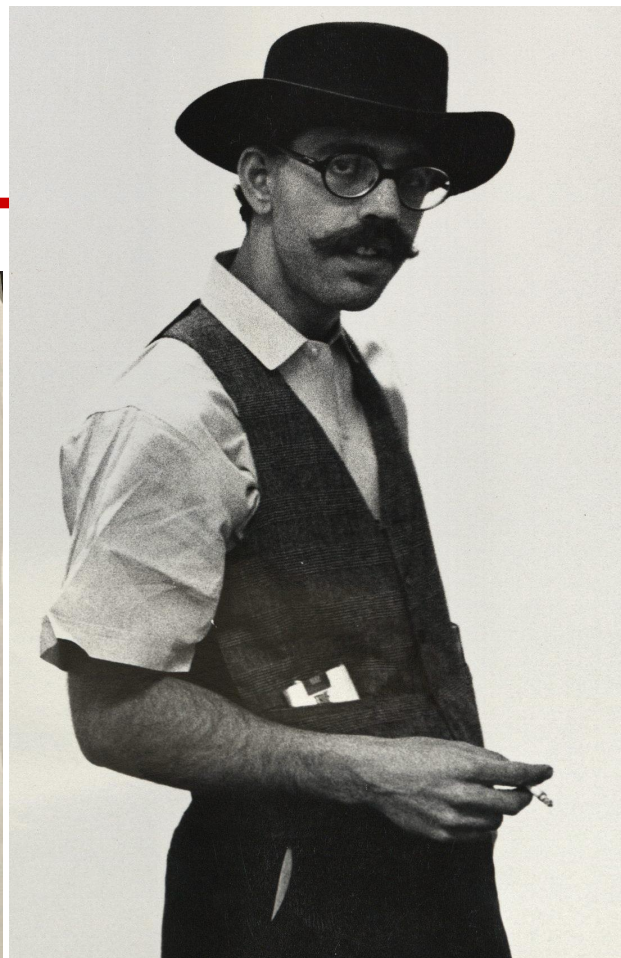
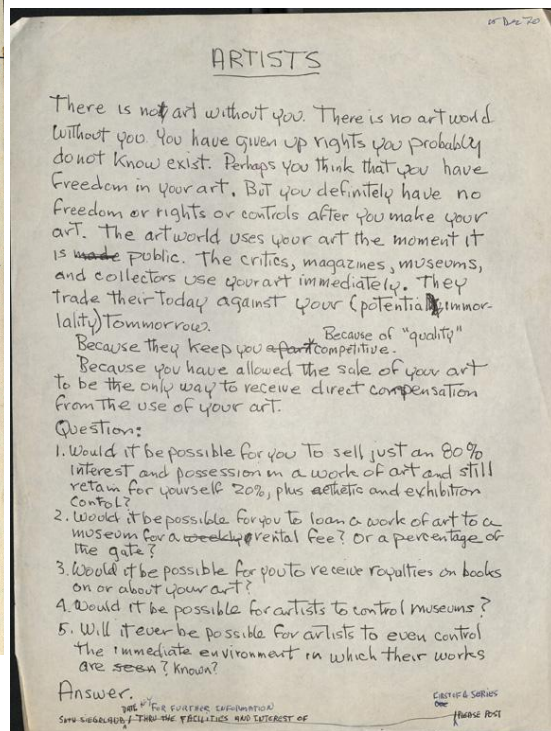
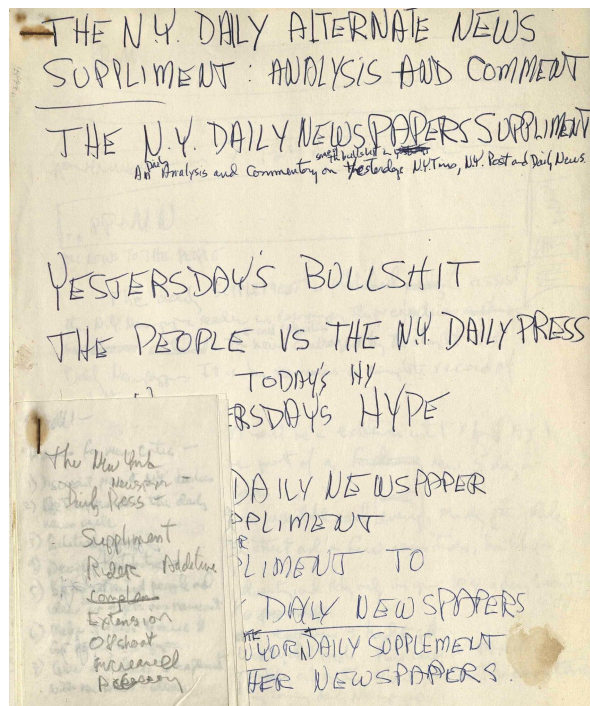
Christiana Dobrzynski Grippe



Main topics

- Appraisal and preservation of artists records
 - “Mediated” documentation coming from collectors, curators, dealers rather than directly from artists themselves
 - Living donors AND living artists
 - Artists record continuum
-

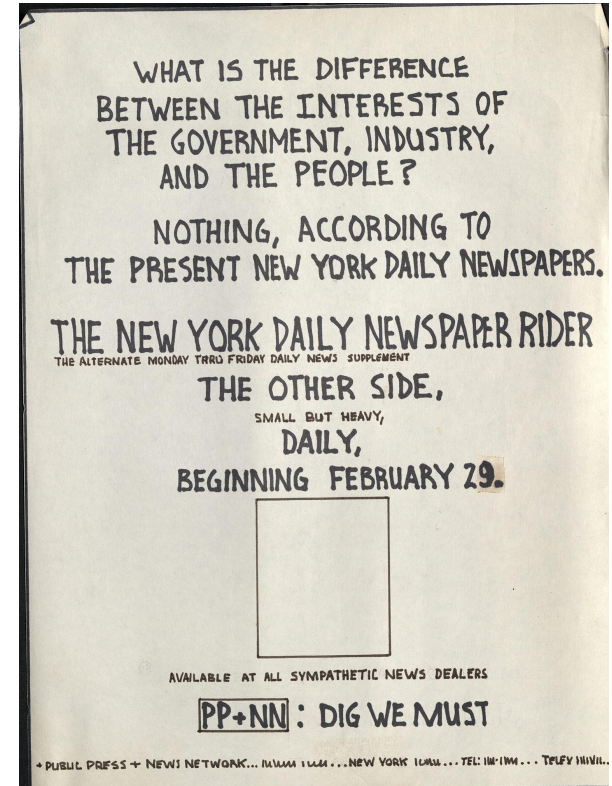
Seth Siegelaub Papers



Living artists

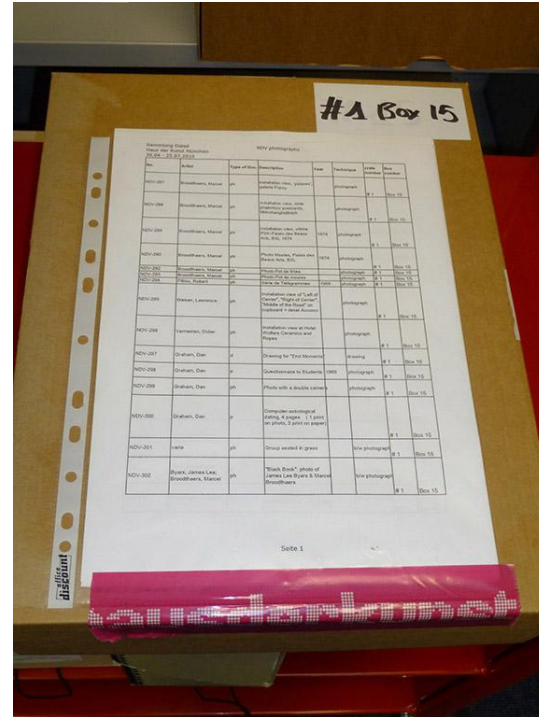


Living donor

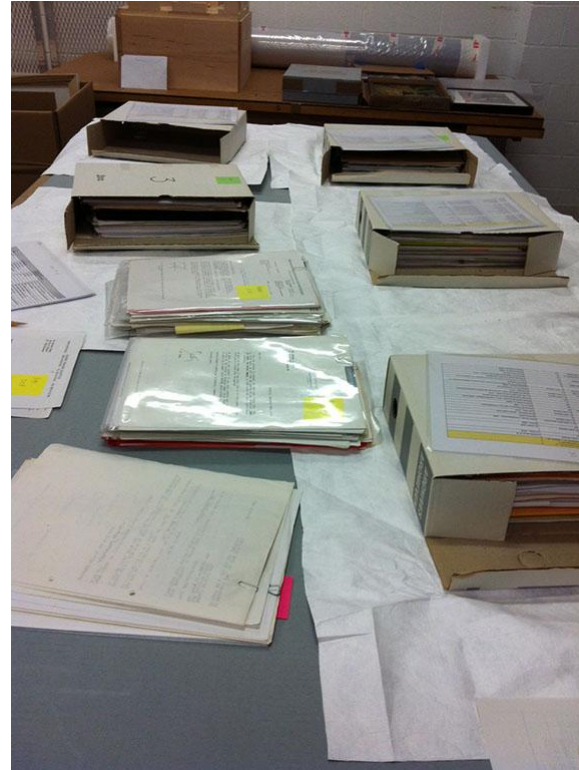
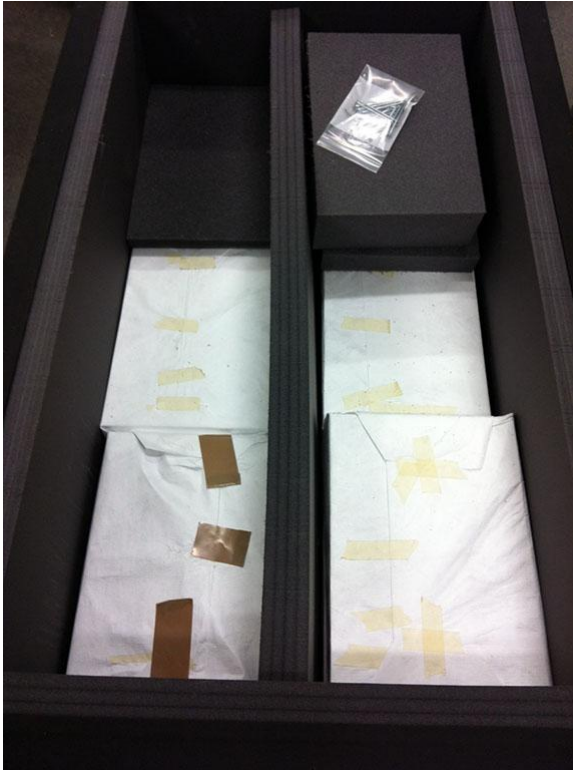


Herman and Nicole Daled Papers





Appraisal: A multi-step process (round 2)



Appraisal: A multi-step process (round 3)



Appraisal: Work of art or archival record?

James Lee Byars correspondence



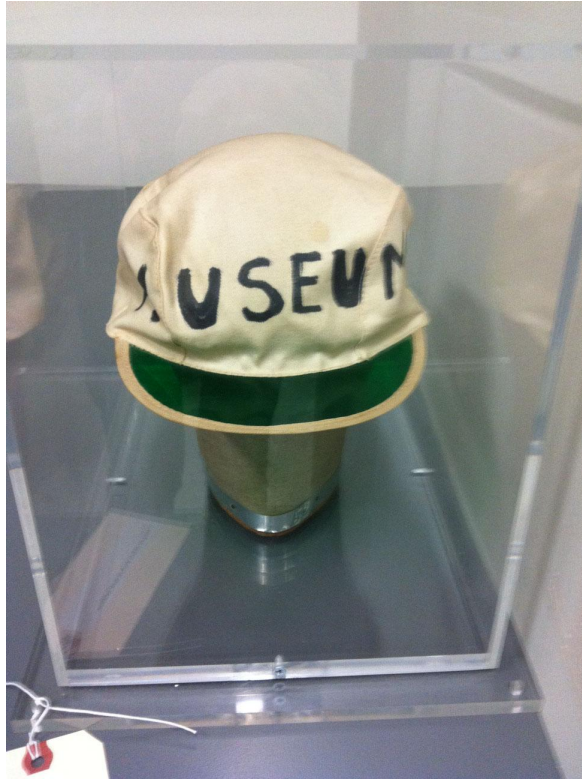
Appraisal: Work of art or archival record?

James Lee Byars correspondence



Appraisal: Work of art or archival record?

Marcel Broodthaers' *Musée d'Art Moderne*



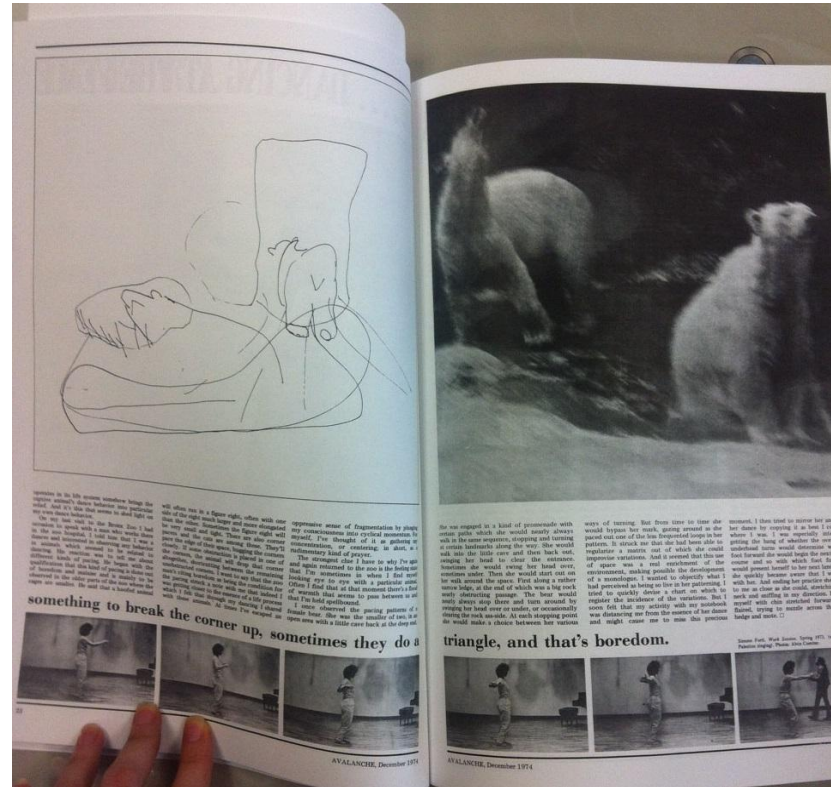
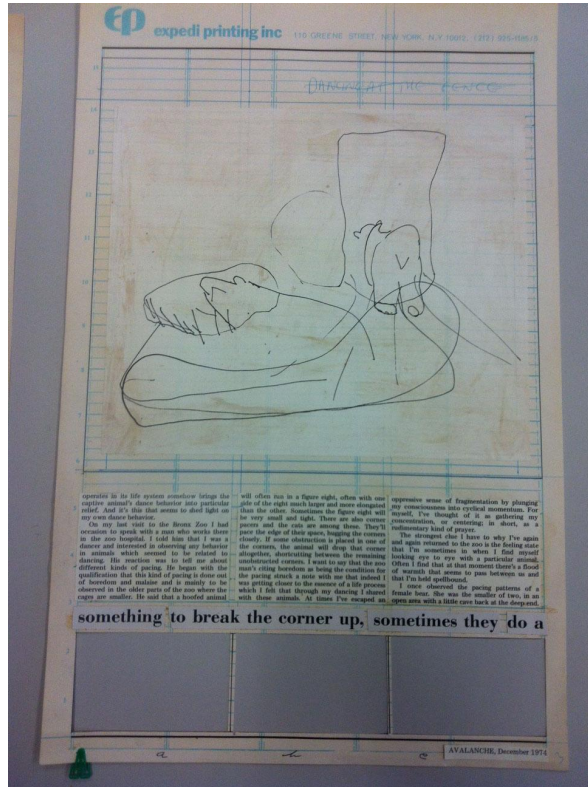
Mediated artist documentation and donors



Avalanche Magazine Archives



Appraisal and preservation approaches: Work of art or archival record?



Appraisal and preservation approaches: Work of art or archival record?



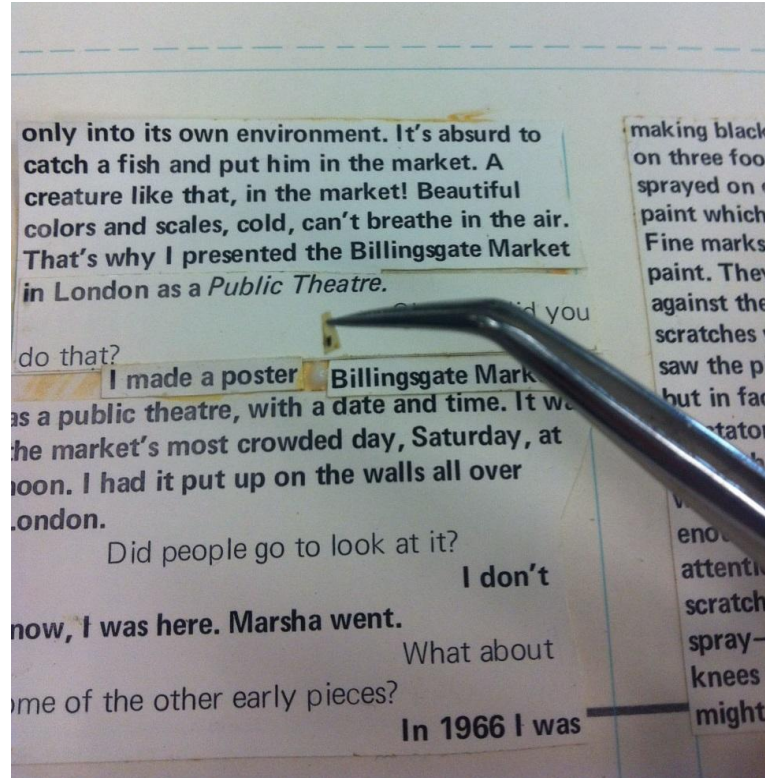
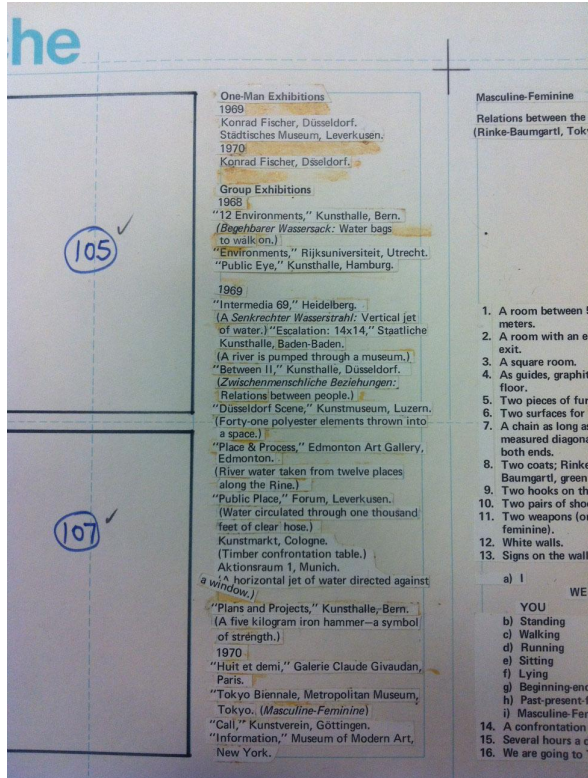
Appraisal and preservation approaches: Work of art or archival record?



Preservation



Preservation



Living donors, a living artist, an artist's family, and the artists records continuum



Beth Levitt



www.seniorartists.org

Is a nonprofit organization

Assists artists with documenting and inventorying their life's work

Educates artists about legal issues pertaining to their art, estate, and artistic rights

Produces video oral history interviews of artists for online viewing

How SAI Began

- Death of printmaker Jerome Kaplan in 1997
 - Wife Anne faced with inventorying his body of work for estate/probate
 - Realized how early organization could help the inheritor
 - Founded SAI in 1998
-

Information for Artists

www.seniorartists.org/kaplanlearningcenter.html

Website provides written and video essays on

Approaching museums

Appraisal of the artist's estate

Tax implications

Inventorying artwork

Inventory Templates for MAC and PC (free)

Link to Inventory Databases (\$\$)

Creating an archives

Oral History Inventory Project

- Utilizes docents and students
 - Collaborative effort with local cultural institutions
 - The University of the Arts, James A. Michener Art Museum, Community Arts Center, Drexel University, Fleisher Art Memorial, Moore College of Art & Design, PAFA, and Temple University Tyler School of Art
- Artists are selected by the participating organizations
-

Process

- Meetings with docents, students, board members, and videographers
 - Discussion of estate planning, appraisal, weeding and inventorying the art, arranging papers and records, and the interview process
-

Results

- Artists begin the art inventory process
 - Provide on-line access to
 - Sample gallery of artist's work
 - Artist's resume
 - Oral History Interview
-

SAI New Directions

- Involve local archives students
 - To work with artists to arrange papers
 - Into the oral history process
 - Senior Artists/New Artist Mentor Program
 - Facebook Presence
-

Panel discussion topics

Questions and contact info

Janine St. Germain: janine@janinestgermain.com

Christiana Dobrzynski Grippe: cjdobrzynski@gmail.com

Beth Levitt: beth.levitt@nara.gov

Susan Anderson: skanderson@philamuseum.org
